

# **San Bernardino Associated Governments 2006 Federal Legislative Program**

## **OVERALL OBJECTIVES**

1. Protect and enhance current funding levels for transportation programs.
2. Protect and enhance flexibility in use of transportation revenue.
3. Reduce or eliminate costly and duplicative administrative and regulatory requirements.

## **FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM**

1. **Protect and enhance current funding levels for transportation programs.**
  - A. Support legislation to secure adequate budget appropriations for highway, bus, rail, air quality and mobility programs in San Bernardino County. Support efforts to bring transportation appropriations to authorized levels.
  - B. Seek a more equitable appropriation of highway trust funds for donor states, which includes California, as well as a fair share for San Bernardino County of any federal funding made available for transportation programs and projects.
  - C. Support efforts to increase federal transit and highway program funding via utilization of the highway trust fund balance.
  - D. Support legislative efforts to index the gas tax to an inflationary index or to the price of gasoline to ensure that federal Highway Trust Fund revenues will not continue falling relative to total miles driven. Any indexing provisions approved at the federal level should include a prohibition against the diversion of gas taxes collected from transportation purposes to general fund purposes. In addition, if the index is tied to the price of gasoline, SANBAG supports a statutory cap and floor as part of the indexing provision to provide a consistent, predictable revenue stream and protect against significant tax increases due to market fluctuation on the price of gasoline.
  - E. Seek legislation to correct the reduction to the federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF) due to the federal subsidy of ethanol-based fuels, as well as, to compensate California's reduced HTF apportionment level due to the implementation of ethanol-blended fuel in 2003.
  - F. Support continued Federal commitment of funds to support public transit, to assure that California and the western states receive a fair share of the AMTRAK funding resources as compared to the North East Corridor.
  - G. Seek specialized funding for goods movement projects of international and national significance that are beyond the funding ability or responsibility of local and state transportation programs and budgets, including the ability to levy locally administered fees to mitigate the costs resulting from the impact of goods movement on local transportation infrastructure, i.e. a state and/or regional container fee.

- H. In support of the 5-County Joint Venture - representing the five Southern California County Transportation Commissions, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and the Los Angeles Economic Development Commission (LAEDC), as well as private sector companies, including the railroads - to support legislative efforts to create a regional goods movement program currently referred to as the "West Coast National Freight Gateway Program."
  - I. Seek funding for airport ground access and other airport development needs in San Bernardino County.
  - J. Seek continued funding for the construction of the Inland Empire Transportation Management Center (TMC) for congestion mitigation purposes, as well as federal funding to provide for enhance homeland security/emergency operations services as an additional component of the center's functionality.
- 2. Protect and enhance flexibility in use of transportation revenue.**
- A. Support legislation that will modify federal project development requirements for transit projects to make them more consistent with the process employed for highway projects.
  - B. Support legislation to exempt commuter rail services operating within existing railroad right-of-way from federal new start and alternative analysis requirements in order to utilize federal funding.
  - C. Support efforts to pursue funds to facilitate timely conversion of public sector fleets to alternative fuels to meet federal fleet conversion mandates.
  - D. Support tax benefits and/or incentives for transportation demand management programs and alternative fuel programs to promote the use of alternate modes of transportation.
  - E. Seek funding for Alameda Corridor East improvement projects, which includes the Freight Corridor generally described as the Union Pacific Railway and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Mainline tracks from East Los Angeles (terminus of the Alameda Corridor) through Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. Support increased federal funding opportunities for San Bernardino and Riverside Counties to access these funding sources. Seek continued federal funding of Maritime Administration studies focusing on an "Inland Rail Port" in San Bernardino County and Riverside County.
  - F. Support legislation that ensures coordination of transportation and social service agency funding (i.e. Departments of Aging, Rehabilitation, and Welfare).
  - G. Support legislative or administrative policies that promote a "regional" approach to airport development and usage of Southern California Logistics, San

Bernardino International, and Ontario International airports and the March Joint Use Airport.

**3. Reduce or eliminate costly and duplicative administrative and regulatory requirements.**

- A. Support legislation and/or administrative reforms that result in cost and time savings to environmental clearance processes for transportation construction projects.
- B. Work with the Administration and the San Bernardino Congressional delegation to reach an equitable resolution to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) retroactive interpretation of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance guidelines that would require the use of alternative or restricted funding for costly curb-ramp upgrades within the boundaries of all federally-aided projects. Specifically, would seek an exemption for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) projects that do not necessitate ground alteration or disturbance, and which funding is specifically earmarked for such purposes, including wireless technology and traffic synchronization.
- C. Oppose legislative changes to alter the formula by which Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds are allocated to states; specifically, attempts to change the weighting factors assigned to nonattainment areas for the purpose of determining each state's share of CMAQ funds, as well as to assure that the funding continues to be allocated directly to the transportation commission.
- D. Support administrative or legislative action to ensure consistency among the Federal congestion management and the State's Congestion Management Program requirements.
- E. Monitor and, where appropriate, support studies of market-based pricing measures to relieve traffic congestion, improve air quality and/or fund transportation alternatives.
- F. Seek Federal authorization allowing states, where appropriate to pursue options to privatize various aspects of transportation to increase the efficiencies and effectiveness of their available resources through private sector participation.
- G. Due to the elimination of Federal transit operating subsidies, support legislation to also eliminate Federal requirements and regulations regarding transit operations.
- H. Support legislation and/or administrative reforms to enhance Caltrans project delivery, such as simultaneous Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and engineering studies, and a reasonable level of contracting out of appropriate activities to the private sector.
- I. Continue to streamline federal reporting/monitoring requirements to ensure efficiency and usefulness of data collected and eliminate unnecessary and/or duplicative requirements.